

S E C R E T

8 November 1968  
CS/HPM-22

MEMORANDUM FOR : All Historical Officers and Writers  
SUBJECT : Planning and Writing CS Station  
Histories

1. This memorandum has been written with the hope that it will provide some guidelines to Historical Officers and Writers and answer many of their early questions about station histories. It is not expected that it will answer them all, nor is it intended as the final word about station histories. Any suggestions for improvement will be welcomed.
2. Of the various kinds of CS historical papers, probably the most complex and difficult to plan and write are the histories of our overseas stations. They must combine administrative and organizational history with the chronological story of many different operational activities and relationships, and must also deal with external factors such as the local political climate and the impact of U.S. policy decisions and international developments.
3. One of the questions most often asked by writers of CS histories is, "Exactly what and how much should go into a

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station history, and how should it be put together?" There is no precise or easy answer. No two field stations are just alike, and no two histories can be handled in exactly the same way. But the criteria for completeness of content and the techniques for gathering and organizing the material, are much the same for every station history.

4. Considerable general guidance on content and presentation already exists. CHSB 5-13-1, Chapter II: Approach and Treatment, lists some of the questions a CS historical paper should answer and suggests methods of presentation; Appendix A (pages 22 and 23) also provides some useful guidelines. The observations on writing historical papers presented by Professor Howard M. Ehrmann at our 15 February 1968 meeting (subsequently circulated to all HO's and writers) provide excellent guidance on general principles and techniques. These materials, however, are not addressed solely or in detail to the problems of preparing histories of overseas stations; they are applicable in general to all CS historical papers.

5. The attached paper has drawn largely on ideas presented by Dr. Ehrmann, but has applied these specifically to the preparation of CS station histories. By listing the

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questions that the history should answer, the paper shows the kind of information we expect a good station history to contain; it also suggests approaches to the needed research and to planning and organizing the material. As for the writers' question "how much?", it should be emphasized here that completeness of content does not mean inclusion of excessive detail or lengthy discussion of insignificant matters. Every station history must cover all the important points, but should do so as succinctly and clearly as possible, without burying essential facts and conclusions in a mass of verbiage.

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Executive Secretary  
CS Historical Board

Attachment

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